

FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NEW-YORK YOUNG MEN'S

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

AUXILIARY TO THE

AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY;

WITH

ADDRESSES,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY.

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FIRST ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

NEW-YORK YOUNG MEN'S ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

THE First Annual Meeting of the New-York Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, was held in the Third Free Presbyterian church, on Wednesday afternoon, May 13th, 1835.

The meeting was opened with Prayer by the Rev. Mr. LILLIE.

The Annual Report of the Board of Directors was then read by the Corresponding Secretary, JAS. F. ROBINSON, Esq.

Mr. HENRY B. STANTON, of Ohio, moved the acceptance and publication of the Report.

Said Mr. S.—I perceive by the report just read, that your society pronounces slavery to be a sin, and advocates the doctrine of its immediate abolition. To test the correctness of these principles, let me inquire, *what is slavery?* It is the assumed right forcibly to hold and use persons as things:—or, the assumed right of property in man, without his consent, without forfeiture by crime, and without rendering to him an equivalent. It regards the slave, not as a being susceptible of happiness, but merely as a means of happiness to others. The grand object of the system is not to promote the interest of the slave, but to use the slave in promoting the

interests of the master. As a being possessing rights, entitled to privileges, and susceptible of happiness, the slave is struck out of existence, and he merely lives as a convenient appendage to the existence of others: as a valuable article, to be used solely for the master's benefit. In a word, slavery annihilates the fundamental and eternal distinction which God has constituted between *persons and things*, and drags down to the mean level of chattels, beings created a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor,—beings destined to immortality, clothed with the attributes of intelligence and will, purchased by a Savior's blood, invited by the word of Revelation and by the Holy Ghost, to companionship with angels, and to fellowship with God. Is not this a sin? Can that be ought but sinful, which exacts toil without remuneration, which crushes the body under an accumulation of physical evils, which shuts up the mind to famine, which up-roots and scatters to the winds, the social attachments and the domestic affections, which paralyzes conscience, blunts the moral feelings, and damns the soul!

What is the *remedy* for slavery? Let it be remembered, that slavery is the work of *man*. It is the *slave holder* that forges chains for the body, mantles the mind in midnight, and whelms the soul in perdition. Then let the slave holder instantly cease this God-counteracting system. Let him "cease to do evil." When? NOW. Let him instantly stop holding and using persons as things—moral agency as property. Let him stop buying and selling men, women and children. Let him stop depriving the poor of their wages, and give them what is just and equal. Let him stop depriving them of knowledge, and pour into their minds the light of science and religion. Let him stop sanctioning the slave laws, either by practice or precept, and strive to procure their repeal. Let him act out the law of love. *That is the remedy.*

"But, give me your plan." Suppose, sir, said Mr. S. a robber should enter your house at midnight, and commence rifling your property. You bid him instantly to cease. He replies, "Give me your *plan*." Plan! Stop your robbery! Cease your depredations! He lays hold of your treasure, and is about to bear it off. You seize him, and command him to restore to you your property. He replies, "Give me your *plan*. Tell me what you intend to do with it, should I restore it to you. I *must* know your *plan*." Sir, the slave is daily robbed, not of paltry dust, but of rights inalienable,—of treasures immortal. He is robbed of himself, of his wife, of his children—of all that makes life tolerable and eternity desirable. The treasury of his soul is broken open, and its sacred jewels plundered. Redeemed by the blood of atonement, and ministered to by angels, he is held as a chattel, and at will, driven to the shambles, and sold with brute beasts. Who thus makes merchandise of immortality? The question is already answered. Plan!—Let the slave holder act in accordance with God's plan. He respects the rights of *All*, and then requires all to respect *His* rights.

"But, will you not draft for our inspection, a code of laws, that we may see whether or not your scheme is practicable?"

Two things, said Mr. S., are often confounded, which are totally distinct. First, the restoring to the slave by the master, his long withheld rights; and secondly, the political arrangements, the legal enactments, which may be necessary, on account of the new condition of the slave. The first, and it only, is that branch of the subject with which abolitionists have to do. The great object of all their efforts is, to get the *heart* right, and then the *head* will devise the plan. Let us persuade the slave holders, from moral considerations, to emancipate their slaves, and then let them go up to their legislatures, and under the benevolent impulse which the deed of emancipation has imparted to their hearts, their understandings will devise laws for the protection of the disenthralled, which shall do honor to a yoke-breaking, bond-sundering, slave-emancipating people. Let us not touch the political details of this subject, till the national vision is purged, the national sympathy aroused, the national conscience quickened, and the national heart purified. Pursue the contrary course, and some petty provision in our code will be the subject of dispute, and will be converted into a shield to ward off every bolt which we may hurl at the sin of slave holding.

Sir, this call for a plan, and refusal to join our ranks unless it is furnished, comes with an ill grace from the slave holder, and his pro-slavery co-adjutor. Suppose I rudely assault my brother, and beat him till he is well nigh dead. You remonstrate, and command me to desist. But instead of this, I reply, "My brother is well nigh dead—his case is desperate,—he is in very delicate circumstances,—I cannot cease beating him till you tell me what physician you intend to call,—with what ointment you will bind up his wounds,—what medicine you will give him,—why he is gasping, and I cannot leave him thus,—it would be cruel,—Oh give me your plan!" Is the supposed case more absurd than the real one?

Plan! Let the slave holder no longer regard the declaration of independence as "a rhetorical flourish,"—the Bible as the apologist for oppression, but rather act on the principle, that all men are created equal, and are made of one blood, and his slave will stand forth as a man enfranchised—as a brother beloved.

"Oh, but *immediate* emancipation would be unsafe,—the slave would butcher his master, and fill the land with rapine and murder."

Suppose, said Mr. S., the intelligence should reach this city to-day, that the slaves had risen in insurrection, and were scattering dismay and death through the south. Would not the veriest child know the cause? "They are fighting for their freedom," would be the universal cry. Give the slave his freedom then, and will he fight because you give it to him? First, he fights because he is robbed of liberty, and when it is restored, he fights because he has got it! God must repeal the fundamental laws of human

nature, dry up the springs of human conduct, before men will act on such principles.

"But, would you turn the slave loose?" Loose! What does the objector mean? Turn the *slave* loose! No. We turn *freemen* loose. We don't unchain the tiger, but we strike off his chain, and by that act make him a lamb, and *then* turn him "loose." We loose the slave from the exasperating chain of slavery, and bind him to his master in cords of love and gratitude never to be broken.

"This sounds very well in theory, but it will fail in practice. Slavery must not be abolished immediately, but *gradually*." Why? "Because the slave is not now fit for liberty."

Permit me, said Mr. S., to answer this objection with some care. At the West, where I reside, colonization as a remedy for slavery, is rapidly being abandoned,—and those who in abandoning it, do not come up to the standard of immediateism, are chasing the phantom gradualism.

Not fit for liberty! What is liberty? The possession and exercise of inalienable rights. Why is the slave unfitted? Has he forfeited liberty? But the slave, so far from being a criminal, is himself the subject of every outrage.

Unfit for liberty! Has not God committed to every moral agent the keeping of his own happiness? When God endows beings with the powers and susceptibilities of moral agency, by that very act, he fits them for the exercise and enjoyment of those powers and susceptibilities. Those constituents which are essential to moral agency, render their possessor fit to exercise all the privileges of moral agency; among which are liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Hence, the mere endowment of a being with the powers of moral agency, makes him the safest depository of the right to employ them. Of these, the slave is already in possession,—they are inalienable—are birth-right bestowments,—and until his mental constitution is changed, the laws of this moral agency repealed, and he uncreated as a *person*, and he be created as a *thing*, his liberty cannot rightfully be the property of another.

"True, yet, owing to his peculiar condition, he is not yet prepared for the full exercise of these rights. He must first be taught how to use them."

How will you teach him to use his rights, unless you give them to him to use? Will you prepare him to use them by practising him in the disuse of them? Would you render him expert in using them by forbidding him to use them? That he may cultivate familiarity with them, you hang them up beyond his reach, or bury them out of his sight! Go send your son to a deaf and dumb asylum to become an orator. What! learn a being to be a man by accustoming him to be a brute! The old adage runs, "practice makes perfect," but when applied to the slave, the law is nullified, and the lack of practice is to make perfect.

Mr. S. illustrated his position by reference to the South American Repub-

lic. Although they had long been the victims of despotism, yet, we did not advocate their gradual disenfranchisement, but an immediate restitution of their rights. And he contended, as it is with nations, so it must be with individuals. Freedom is the school, the only school, in which they can learn the art of self-control.

"Aye, but he must be subject to some control." Granted. The point at issue is, what shall that control be? Two plans are proposed. The plan of the gradualist is, continue in slavery; liable, by consequence, to the abuse of despotic power. The abolitionist proposes, not emancipation *from* law, but emancipation *into* law. The one, the irresponsible control of the master, the other, the wise and benign control of the law. The one, outlawry, with its concomitants, outrage and vice,—the other, citizenship, with the dignities and immunities of manhood.

"Oh, they are so ignorant, they certainly must have some *intellectual* preparation."

How much education must a man have before he is fit to own his own body, and to receive the fruits of his own toil? Must he be able to read and comprehend the Declaration of Independence? Must he be competent to write a deed of manumission? Must he have advanced in arithmetic as far as "Loss and Gain?" Suppose, said Mr. S., some conscientious planter, the owner of 50 slaves, should employ a faithful instructor for his plantation. Let him teach the slaves geography, by which they should learn that Canada immediately bordered on our own country—that any slave escaping hither, would not be returned to his master. Let them be instructed in history. Let them read of that great struggle for liberty, when three millions of freemen rose elastic from the blow of a despot, and rushed to the mortal struggle in defence of their rights. Let them read of Lexington, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Yorktown. Let them learn, that in this contest of right with power, of liberty with despotism, our fathers cast this declaration in the teeth of their oppressors—"All men are created equal," and that in this conflict the sympathies of the friends of liberty and of man throughout the world, were ours, and they went with us to battle and to death. Let him read in the Bible, that God is the God of the oppressed, and that he has not a single attribute to shelter the oppressor, but his throne is pledged for the overthrow of injustice. Let such lessons inspire the slaves with the dignity of men, and think you they will tamely be driven to the field or to the shambles, like brute beasts. Will they consent to be slaves? Nay, verily. Intelligence and slavery cannot dwell together. The light of knowledge melts the chain. Education expands and ennobles the mind. It would make the slave a—**MAN**—and when he becomes a man, he will not consent to be a slave. I should not apprehend bloodshed, but I should expect to see the slave escaping where he could breathe the air of freedom. But would it be entirely devoid of danger? While teaching the

slave to respect the rights of others, at the same moment, forcibly withholding from him his rights, do you not exasperate him, and tempt him to vindicate his cause by force?

"Do you not intend to give the slave some *moral* training, before he is let loose upon society, among human rights and human interests?"

The alleged object of this moral training is, to teach the slave to respect the rights of others. Therefore, say I, to beget in him a sacred regard for the rights and interests of others, let them sacredly regard his rights and interests. The nation has robbed him of rights irreversible. Let the nation return them to him, with confession. The church has robbed him. Let her repent, and do homage to him by coming in tears and sackcloth, and making restitution. This would demonstrate to him the sacredness of human rights. But would not every lesson of morality we should enforce upon the slave, while holding him as merchandize, be stamped in his eye with the brand of hypocrisy? We think he would say, "Away with your sage admonition. I loathe it. Thou that teachest that *another* should not steal, dost *thou* steal?"

Suppose it be admitted for a moment, that the slave is not fit for liberty. What, I ask, unfitted him? SLAVERY! Then let slavery be annihilated. And does the gradualist propose to fit the slave for liberty in the same school which unfitted him? Is *future* slavery to remedy the evils of *past* slavery? "The slaves must be fitted for liberty." Very well. Where? and how? Are the cotton and sugar plantations of the south, the *academies*—and drivers and slaves, the *instructors*; and is a toil-uncompensating, a chain-forging, a kindred-sundering, an intellect-darkening, a Bible-denying, a conscience-annihilating, a hope-destroying, a soul-damning system, practiced from birth to death, the *lessons* which are to be taught them? Is *this* the initiatory process?

"Immediate Emancipation would be cruel to the slave. From his habits of indolence, he would be unable to provide for his wants—he would be defrauded of his earnings."

How kind certain persons are, at *certain times*, towards the poor slaves! Why, sir, they can travel, yea, live at the south for years, and see the slave toil like a beast, watering the soil with his tears, and fattening it with his blood, and not one throb of sympathy ruffle their bosoms. But when a philanthropic hand would snatch them from these perils, oh, their every sympathy is aroused, and from its long repose, seems to act with unwonted vigor, and they cry out, "Don't treat the poor slave so cruelly as to set him free; why, he'll starve, or steal, or be cheated, or, or—how *can* he take care of himself." Sir, I have no sympathy with *such* sympathy.

Not take care of themselves? Let a slave answer. James Bradiey, once a slave, and formerly a member of Lane Seminary, in answer to this question, said, "Take care of themselves, if set free? I reckon they could.

Who takes care of them now? Their masters don't work any, nor their mistresses, and if the slaves didn't take care of themselves, and *their masters too*, they would all starve to death together. And if they can support themselves with this load on their shoulders, strange if they couldn't do it when it is tumbled off." I turn the objector over to James Bradley.

Can't provide for themselves? Let me enquire what provision is made for them now, and see if they would not be at least as well off, if left to provide for themselves. One peck of corn a week to each slave with a little salt, is all that is provided on very many of the southern plantations. Thirteen bushels of corn a year. Worth four dollars. Their clothing does not cost the master ten dollars per annum. Fifteen dollars per year for food and clothing! But, I will be liberal, and write it down *twenty dollars*.—Now, sir, give the slave a fair compensation for his labor, and what being, having the semblance of a man, could not earn \$20 in 365 days? Thirteen bushels of corn, half a bushel of salt, and three linsey-woolsey frocks a year! Surely, men who could not do this, would be admirably fitted to establish and build up a commercial and Christian colony, amidst barbarous tribes on a distant shore.

But, the objection is worse than absurd. Suppose it be conceded that the slaves are unable to provide for themselves. What is our duty as Christians, as men? Here are 2,500,000 beings, lying at our doors, palsied, maimed and fainting, unable to be their own protectors. We then must throw around them our guardian arms, and become their protectors. How does republican and Christian America take care of other unfortunates!—For the sick, she provides hospitals; for the deaf, the dumb, the blind, asylums; for the insane, retreats; for the outcast and degraded, houses of refuge; and her prayers and her alms are registered in heaven. What then shall be done with the two and a half million unfortunates, who have a skin not colored like our own? Is *slavery* to be their asylum? Go then, objector, to immediate emancipation, and tell Nicholas and the Sultan, that in free and Christian America, the whites provide for themselves, hospitals for the sick, retreats for the insane, asylums for the deaf, the dumb, the blind, and refuges for the outcast: while for the blacks, whom their rapacity has rendered unable to minister to their own wants, they provide manacles and chains, whips and iron collars, toil without wages, cruelty without alleviation, insult without redress, despair without hope, and death without salvation. Ah, this would be care indeed! Such care as Pharaoh showed to the Hebrews, Nero to Rome, the Sultan to the Greeks, Nicholas to the Poles.

Am I severe? I would not be unjustly severe. Remember, all who do not embrace the doctrine of immediate emancipation must advocate conti-

nued slavery. And is not the constituent principle, the vital essence of slavery, despotism? Who would be a slave?

"Immediate emancipation would be unkind to the slave. He does not want his freedom until he can be placed where he can enjoy it. Till then he will be contented and happy."

Strange as it may seem, the idea that the slaves are generally contented and happy, is very common among the opponents of immediate emancipation. But it is impossible that a being having the power of choice, can be happy as a slave. The statement too, has already been disproved by the objector himself. Just now it was contended that if the slave were set free, he would be unable to earn his bread, because he is so indolent, and has such an instinctive aversion to labor. How happy then must he be now, when all his toil is wrung from him without compensation, and he is coerced to labor by the fear, yea, the smart, of the cart whip.

The insurrections which have occurred, and which are constantly dreaded at the south, are another proof, that the slave is contented and happy!

Contented? Who doubts it? Let him visit one of our southern hotels, and every newspaper will give indubitable evidence of the fact in columns of advertisements, headed by pictures of slaves, of both sexes, and all ages, running, leaping, kicking up their heels, and showing every demonstration of contentment. But, what is a little remarkable, they are all looking over their shoulders; and, stranger yet, are running *from* slavery! If slavery be adapted to produce happiness, I should think the more the better: and that the slave, instead of running from Kentucky and Virginia, to Canada, would rush towards the sugar plantations of Louisiana, where they would find contentment to their hearts content.

Foolish men! surely, they need much intellectual training to fit them for freedom!

But it is not so. The slaves long for their liberty. Happy slave? Contented to be a chattel? to be robbed of his own body—of his own mind? Happy in being defrauded of his temporal happiness, his eternal weal? Contented to be a brute? Can it indeed be so? Has not God given to man a natural longing after freedom? Yea, it is the atmosphere of the mind, the nutriment of the soul. And is the slave contented and happy? What has so rudely marred God's image? What has rolled back the natural instincts of the soul to their sources, and sealed up the fountain? Slavery? Aye, **SLAVERY**. Then let it be accursed. Be your arm nerved to rescue man from this slaughter house of mind—this carnal house of immortality. Let the chain be broken NOW, and the victim brought up into the sunlight of liberty, that we may re-enstamp on his brow the effaced image of Jehovah. On this rock, let the argument for the immediate and total annihilation of slavery, be based.

In conclusion, Mr. S. remarked, in reference to the whole system of gradualism, that its fundamental error consists in admitting the *right* of the master to hold the slave. Many of its advocates say that slavery is sinful, and yet, that it ought not be immediately abandoned. Gradualism opens the door of indefinite delay. While the immediateist thunders NOW in the ear of the slave-holder, gradualism keeps ever in advance of him, beckoning him onward, yet ever eluding his grasp, whispering in his ear, "to-morrow, to-morrow." Sir, to-morrow never comes. Our respected brother from Kentucky, told us to day of gradualists, personally known to him, of thirty years standing; who had grown grey in chasing this phantom, but had never yet emancipated a single slave. And, sir, they never will, till they renounce this delusive doctrine.

Mr. S. said he was happy in being permitted to address a Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society. Attempts have been made in high places to stifle discussion on this subject among young men. But it is too late. Discussion has begun, and it must go on. We live in an age of discussion. Slavery is filling the public eye, and absorbing the public feeling, and it is in vain to attempt to put down inquiry among young men, by threats of public scorn, or popular violence. The human mind *must* feel when the eye rests full upon the sin of slave-holding. To make it otherwise, God must repeal the fundamental laws of our nature. We live in free America, the principles of whose government are pledged to our success. And above all, God is with us. He is our refuge, our hope, and shall be an exceeding great reward.

JAMES G. BIRNEY, Esq. of Kentucky, introduced the following resolution, and supported the same by an able and eloquent speech :

Resolved, That the objects of this Society are benevolent in their character, beneficial in their tendency, and lay claim alike to the sympathy of the Christian, and the support of the patriot.

GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq. moved the following resolution, which he sustained by one of his most powerful addresses :

Resolved, That the doctrine of immediate emancipation needs no test of its soundness, safety and practicability, stronger than has already been furnished, and that it is the only efficient remedy for that system which degrades and oppresses more than two millions of our fellow men.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
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NEW-YORK YOUNG MEN'S
ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

The society whose anniversary we are assembled to celebrate, was formed on the 2d day of May, 1834. After an animated and interesting meeting, which was addressed by Mr. Wiley, of Auburn Seminary, Rev. Dr. Cox, and President Green, of Oneida Institute, a preamble and constitution were adopted, and the young men present were invited to come forward and sanction its principles, by enrolling themselves as members of the society. A considerable number immediately responded to the call, and attached their names to the constitution, and our strength and numbers have been gradually increasing up to the present time.

The Board immediately issued an address to their fellow-citizens, by which they attempted to show that slavery was a national evil, and required, to some extent, a national remedy; giving the true character of slavery in the United States; vindicating the remedy of immediate emancipation, and urging the *young men* of our country, especially, by the weightiest motives, to come up to the aid of those who are endeavoring to persuade their countrymen to leave off oppression, break the bands of wickedness and let the oppressed go free.

Two thousand copies of this address were published, and a great proportion of them have been circulated.

Soon after the formation of the society, the able and interesting letter of the Hon. James G. Birney on colonization was published.

Ten thousand copies were immediately printed for this society, and circulated in this city and Brooklyn, and on board steamboats and other vessels as they were about to depart from the city.

This letter was considered an able exposition of the character and tendency of the Colonization Society, and coming from a man who was born and educated in a slaveholding state, and himself for many years a slaveholder, and coming too from one who had for some time been employed as an agent of the American Colonization Society, it was supposed, and not without reason, that it would have great influence on the public mind in forming their judgment of the merits of that institution.

Without detracting at all from the character of the founders and early patrons of that society, and without impeaching the motives of those who now lend their influence in sustaining it, we cannot but deprecate its continued existence among us, as calculated to foster the interests of slaveholders, prolong the continuance of slavery in our country, and cherish the unrighteous and cruel prejudice now existing against the colored people.

An evening free school for the instruction of colored persons, principally adults who were unable to attend the day schools, was established by the Board in the rooms of the Phoenix Society, Howard-street, and continued by them through the winter, free of expense to the society. There was generally an attendance of about twenty scholars, some of whom made *uncommon proficiency* in their studies, and all of them manifested an eagerness to obtain knowledge truly commendable. This school was established rather as an experiment, and the Board desire to express their full conviction that evening schools, opened in any part of the city, for the instruction of colored adults, would be well attended by those who are desirous of improvement, and who would gratefully embrace any opportunity afforded them for that purpose. The Board have also lent their influence in establishing and sustaining Sabbath schools and Bible classes for colored persons, wherever opportunities presented.

At a meeting of the society, held on the 17th of February last, resolutions were adopted expressive of the high sense the society entertained of the value of the services of the Hon. John Dickson

in the House of Representatives, on the presentation of the petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the President was directed to transmit to him a copy of the same.

An answer has been received from Mr. Dickson, stating his conviction of the justice and benevolence of the cause in which we are engaged, and assuring us of his hearty cooperation in any future efforts to promote its success.

Two or three sermons have been delivered before the society during the past year, and the Board recommend the plan of a monthly sermon for the future, to be delivered by the different clergymen in the city favorable to our cause.

Though the unnatural state of public feeling may have heretofore rendered it wise to lie in a measure at anchor, until its angry waves should subside, yet we feel assured, that the time has now come when the society should enter upon a vigorous course of action. Prejudice is giving away—opposition is becoming less violent, and the minds of men are opening to receive the truth, and the truth in love should be given them, until the mighty icebergs of prejudice which have been thrown around the colored people as a wall of adamant shall be melted away, and until the hearts of oppressors and those who love and justify oppression shall melt into love and compassion for all the intelligent universe of God as it has rolled forth from his creating hand.

The board have lately entered into an arrangement with the parent society, by which Mr. Theodore D. Weld, who has been laboring with great success in the state of Ohio, is to become the agent of this society. To those who know Mr. Weld, he needs no recommendation of ours. He is a young man, and a young man of great powers of mind, and uncommon energy of character, and he cannot fail to give an impulse to any cause which he may advocate. He has thrown his whole soul into sympathy with the slave, and we are confident that he will speedily effect a revolution in public sentiment on the subject of slavery, in that portion of the country where he is laboring. When we appeal to the friends of liberty, and especially to the young men, to aid us in sustaining such a man as Mr. Weld, we feel assured that we shall not appeal in vain.

During the past year our expenses have been two hundred and twenty-five dollars, but by the liberality of our friends we have been more than sustained. During the coming year we hope to enlarge our operations in the city, besides sustaining an agent abroad ; and our necessities will probably call for as many thousands as we have expended hundreds.

We do not intend that our field of action shall be circumscribed, though we imitate the apostles and begin at Jerusalem, or in our own city. We shall extend our sympathies and our efforts abroad, wherever truth may go and reach the conscience of the oppressor, and wherever relief may come in any form to our weeping, bleeding, groaning and dying fellow-men. We shall do what we can to hasten the time when every son and daughter of Adam shall breathe his native air, the air of freedom. The spirit of freedom is emphatically the spirit of our times.

The love of liberty, it has been truly said, is the governing principle of the age. For a century past, almost every nation and class of men have been agitated by it. Tyrants upon their thrones have done it homage by combination to repress its action and crush its power. By its influence, the silent but irrepressible heavings of the soul to throw off its shackles and recover its birthright, have rocked thrones to their base, and plunged nations in blood. It was this principle that moved the Puritans to abandon their country and their home, and seek an asylum in the deep forest of an unknown world. It was this that led our fathers to pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in a contest with the strongest nation of Europe. It was this that moved the brave and undaunted Poles to give themselves a living sacrifice upon the altar of their country. It was this that urged the Greeks to struggle for the recovery of their long lost rights and for the revival of the glory of their ancestors. It was this that crowned with triumph the efforts of British patriots and Christians to free their soil from the polluting influence and withering curse of slavery. It has been this that has nerved the arm and fired the soul of every patriot since the world began. And wherever this has been the controlling and governing principle of the mind and circumstances have been favorable, it has inevitably led to individual greatness and renown. "What

was it," inquires an eloquent statesman, "which gave to our Lafayette his spotless fame? **THE LOVE OF LIBERTY.** What has consecrated his memory in the hearts of good men? **THE LOVE OF LIBERTY.** What nerved his youthful arm with strength and inspired him in the morning of his days with sagacity and counsel? **THE LIVING LOVE OF LIBERTY.** To what did he sacrifice power and rank and country and freedom itself? To **THE HORROR OF LICENTIOUSNESS, TO THE SANCTITY OF PLIGHTED FAITH, TO THE LOVE OF LIBERTY PROTECTED BY LAW.** Thus the great principle of your Revolutionary fathers, of your pilgrim sires, the great principle of the age was the rule of his life, **THE LOVE OF LIBERTY PROTECTED BY LAW."**

These ardent aspirations after liberty, this ruling principle of the soul, this reaching forth after the emancipation of every nation from tyranny and oppression, constituted at once the greatness and the goodness of Lafayette. With an eye upon this "bright and particular lodestar fixed in the front of heaven," the young men of this city have organized themselves into an association to aid in destroying one of the most odious systems of tyranny that ever disgraced any age or nation.

For while glorying in the principles inherited from their fathers and exulting in their triumphant march through the nations of the earth; and while basking in the sunshine of their free and liberal institutions, and enjoying in luxuriance the privileges purchased with the blood of their ancestors, they remembered that a population existed in the midst of their own country almost equal to that of the United States in 1776, who were not only robbed of their dearest rights and privileges, those very rights for which their fathers poured out their blood like water, but that this more than two millions of people, *men, women and children*, were "deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged in law to be chattels, personal in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators and assigns, to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever."

The young men felt especially called upon, by their regard for the honor of their country, by their attachment to the principles upon which the government of their country was based, by their

abhorrence of cruelty, tyranny, injustice and oppression; by their love of liberty, humanity, justice and religion, to come out and lift up their united voice of remonstrance, at a time when good men were not only *palliating* but *justifying* such a system of unmitigated cruelty and crime.

The society have adopted on this subject the principles of the Bible and the Declaration of Independence as founded upon it; that all men are born free and equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are pre-eminently life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and that to deprive any of our fellow men of either of these by superior force, unless forfeited by crime, is in the highest degree criminal. They hold that every man has a right to his own body and mind, and to the free unrestrained use of them in the pursuit of his own happiness, so long as he does not interfere with the rights of others, and that he is bound by the highest obligation to consecrate them both to the service of his Maker. Forcibly to seize upon these rights, then, is not only to rob the individual of a treasure committed to his special guardianship, and for the safe keeping and profitable employment of which he is directly accountable, but it is assuming the prerogative of Deity by attempting to direct and control for the promotion of one's own private and selfish purposes, powers mortal and immortal, which have been created to be used for the glory of God, and upon which has been laid the broad claim of right by creation and preservation, redemption and sanctification. They hold too, that every husband has a right to his own wife, and every wife to her own husband, parents to their children and children to their parents, and that every family has a right to the product of their industry. They hold that every American has a right to the protection as well as the immunities of government, and to the enjoyment, in a greater or less degree, of all the blessings which flow from her civil and religious institutions.

But the system of American slavery annihilates all these rights at a blow. It first shuts up the soul in darkness and then uses up the body in toils and labors, until it wastes away and sinks into an untimely grave—and not only so, it involves in it and drags after it, and gathers around it, with the force and certainty almost of

gravitation, every crime in the decalogue. It is therefore a **SIN**—sin in principle, and sin in practice, and sin too of the blackest die. For it not only uses up *for base and sordid purposes*, the bodies of men, the very temples of God, the Holy Ghost, but with its deadly fangs it lays hold of the immortal soul, and attempts by depriving it of the food which the Creator has provided for its sustenance, to drag it down amidst groans and tears, and blood to the regions of the lost.

They hold then, as a necessary consequence of these principles and facts, that the crime of holding and using men as property should be *immediately, unconditionally and forever* abandoned, and that the golden rule of the Bible should every where be adopted—“Love thy neighbor as thyself,” and “*All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.*”

They desire now to commend the cause of immediate emancipation, with all its ennobling principles and all its weighty interests, to the young men of this city ; and they are happy to assure them that wherever the subject has been brought clearly and fairly before the minds of unsophisticated, ingenuous young men, who have not been trammelled by the almost irresistible influence of great names, or controlled and silenced in thought, word and deed, by guardian authority, they have given the doctrine of immediate, unconditional emancipation, their spontaneous and hearty approval.

“We are placed,” says Daniel Webster, “by our good fortune, and the wisdom and valor of our ancestors, in a condition in which we can act no obscure part ; be it for honor, be it for dishonor, whatever we do, is not likely to escape the observation of the world.”

Let not us then, standing as we do in the heart of this great and growing nation, prove recreant to the principles upon which our fathers based the government of their country ; let not us, for the sake of fostering an unrighteous and an unmanly prejudice, persevere in the maintenance or continue to countenance principles which will not only sap the foundation of our government and tarnish the glory of our country, but tear out the very pillars of the temple of liberty.

Human rights disregarded, justice trampled upon, humanity bleeding, and Christianity outraged, lift up a Macedonian cry for help, and we are confident the voice of the young men of this city will echo the voice of the young men from every portion of our country—"Our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor," are pledged to see the work of liberty completed, so nobly begun by our Fathers.

Submitted by order of the Board,

J. F. ROBINSON,
Corresponding Secretary.

New-York, May 13, 1835.

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CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NEW-YORK YOUNG MEN'S
ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

ART. I. This Society shall be styled the New-York Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, and shall be auxiliary to the "American Anti-Slavery Society."

ART. II. Any young man may become a member of this society by subscribing to these articles, and shall be entitled to a vote at its meetings; contribution to its funds being left to the option of each subscriber.

ART. III. The officers of this society shall consist of a President, two Vice Presidents, a Corresponding and Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, and twenty Managers, who together shall constitute a Board of Directors; to be elected annually by the society, and shall have the power to form their own By-Laws, and to fill all vacancies in their body.

ART. IV. It shall be the duty of the President, (or in his absence, one of the Vice Presidents,) to preside at all meetings of the society, and of the Board of Directors.

ART. V. It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to conduct the correspondence, prepare the Annual Report, and perform such other services as may be required of him by the Board.

ART. VI. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep the minutes of the society, to file all its papers, to give notice of its meetings, and to register the names of its members.

ART. VII. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive and disburse the funds of the society by authority of the Board of Directors.

ART. VIII. The foregoing officers shall constitute the Executive Committee of the society, to whom shall be entrusted the disposition of the society's funds, and the general management of its affairs. Nine shall constitute a quorum.

ART. IX. The object of this society shall be to promote the entire abolition of slavery in the United States, by collecting and diffusing information concerning its true character; by endeavoring to convince our countrymen, by arguments addressed to their understanding and consciences, that slave-holding is a heinous crime in the sight of God, and that the duty, safety and best interests of all concerned, require its immediate and unconditional abandonment.

ART. X. This society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color by encouraging their intellectual, moral and religious improvement, and by correcting the prejudice of public opinion; but never to countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force.

ART. XI. It shall be the especial duty of the Board of Directors to employ their best endeavors to obtain the signatures of as many young men of the city of New-York as may be disposed to join the association, and also to report this society to the Secretary of the American Society.

ART. XII. This society shall meet as occasion may require, at the call of the Board of Directors, and annually, at such time and place as the Board shall appoint, when their report shall be read, the accounts of the Treasurer be presented, appropriate addresses delivered, and the officers chosen.

ART. XIII. This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at an annual meeting.